

Montana K-12 School Choice Survey, June 19, 2012

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Voters solidly support “tax-credit scholarships.” The percentage of those who favor (59% or 60%, depending on the question version) is more than double the number of people who say they oppose the policy (28% and 26%, respectively). No matter the wording of the question, we measure very positive reactions (+31 net and +34 net).

See Questions 13A, 13B, and 14

Based on our split-sample experiment results, it appears adding definition and context for voters does not affect the view of the average Montana voter.

In a follow-up and open-ended question, we asked for the reason why a respondent chose his/her view regarding tax-credit scholarships. Most frequently, he/she would say some combination of “choice,” “freedom,” or “flexibility,” and that the scholarship system was a “good idea.” Greater than 10% of voters stated either of these items.

(Split A) Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. This policy supports a "tax-credit scholarship system". In general, do you favor or oppose a tax-credit scholarship system? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MONTANA	28	31	13	15	13

(Split B) A "tax credit" allows an individual or business to reduce the final amount of a tax owed to government. Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. A "tax-credit scholarship system" allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. In general, do you favor or oppose a tax-credit scholarship system? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MONTANA	33	27	11	15	14

24. For each method, please indicate your opinion regarding how good an education each provides children - Public schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	96	13.4	13.4	13.4
	Good	391	54.8	54.8	68.2
	Fair	169	23.7	23.7	92.0
	Poor	31	4.4	4.4	96.4
	Not sure	26	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	714	100.0	100.0	

25. The Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 6 prohibits the Legislature from making any direct or indirect appropriation or payment from any public fund or monies for any religious purpose or to aid any school controlled in whole or in part by any church. Knowing this, would you support or oppose providing tax benefits (including either tax credits or vouchers) for tuition at a religious school?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly support	124	17.4	17.4	17.4
	Somewhat support	171	23.9	23.9	41.3
	Somewhat oppose	141	19.7	19.7	61.0
	Strongly oppose	198	27.8	27.8	88.8
	Not sure	80	11.2	11.2	100.0
	Total	714	100.0	100.0	

26. The Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 8 provides that the supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in an elected board of trustees. Knowing this, would you support or oppose legislation providing public funding for charter schools that are not supervised and controlled by trustees subject to election in your community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly support	68	9.6	9.6	9.6
	Somewhat support	166	23.2	23.2	32.8
	Somewhat oppose	168	23.6	23.6	56.4
	Strongly oppose	194	27.2	27.2	83.6
	Not sure	117	16.4	16.4	100.0
	Total	714	100.0	100.0	

Subsets have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. As a rule we do not rely on the validity of very small subsets of the data, especially sets smaller than 50-75 respondents. At that size subset we can make generalizations, but in these cases the data is more qualitative than quantitative